



State of Vermont
Vermont Department of Education
120 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05620-2501

TO: School Food Service Managers & Principals

FROM: Laurie M. Colgan, State Director, Child Nutrition Programs

DATE: April 13, 2009

SUBJECT: ARRA Food Service Equipment Grants

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) is providing a one time appropriation for equipment assistance to school food authorities (SFAs) participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). Grants will be awarded on a competitive basis with a priority given to SFAs for schools in which at least 50 percent of the students are eligible for free or reduced price meals.

While the primary effect of the NSLP equipment assistance grants authorized by the ARRA will be to improve the infrastructure in the NSLP, it is important to note that the authority for the grants was provided in the context of the overall effort to stimulate the activity in the American economy. **To provide timely impact on the economy, these applications will be due June 1, 2009**, and awarded shortly thereafter. SFAs must fully obligate (order/have a Purchase Order for the equipment) no later than September 30, 2009, and then submit an SDE 1.1 for their NSLP equipment no later than 60 days from September 30, 2009 (i.e., November 29, 2009).

SFA Applications

Each SFA participating in the NSLP is eligible to submit an application to receive a NSLP equipment assistance grant. Applications may be submitted electronically; however the signature page must be submitted by hard copy with original signatures.

Equipment Definition

Equipment requests may include new equipment, renovation of equipment, or replacement of equipment. As with all Federal grant funds, equipment procured, using NSLP equipment assistance funds must be reasonable and allocable in order to be reasonable and permissible costs. Generally then, using NSLP equipment assistance grant funds to purchase a walk in freezer for school food service use would an allowable cost; whereas renovation of the food service area would fall under the category of school construction costs which must be borne by the school district's general fund. School business officials may refer to 7 CFR 3016.3 and OMB Circular A-87 for more definitions of equipment.

Focus of SFA Grants

In keeping with the dual goals of improving the Program infrastructure and providing an economic stimulus, we encourage prompt purchase of equipment as opposed to equipment purchases that may take many months or years to become effective. Grants applications should incorporate one or more of the following four focus areas:

- Equipment that lends itself to improving the quality of school food service meals that meet the dietary guidelines. (For example, purchasing an alternative to a deep fryer)
- Equipment that improves the safety of the food served in the school meals programs. (Cold/hot holding equipment, dish washing equipment, refrigeration, milk coolers, freezers, etc.)
- Equipment that improves the overall energy efficiency of the school food service operations. (Purchase of an energy-efficient walk in freezer replacing an out-dated, energy-demanding freezer)
- Equipment that allows SFAs to support expanded participation in a school meal program. (Equipment for serving meals in a non-traditional setting or to better utilize cafeteria space)

Criteria for the Award of the Grants

Grants will be awarded to schools based on the need for equipment assistance with priority given to those schools in which not less than 50 percent of the students are eligible for free or reduced price meals. In addition, the ability of the school to fully obligate the grant within the required timeframe will be an important criterion. The application will also ask the SFA to justify their need of the equipment based on a number of factors including, but not limited to: number of students who would benefit; contribution to the enhancement of the quality of the meal service; the availability of existing State and local funding for equipment purchases; expected increase in participation or number of sites in which school meals are served; the SFA's current budget and operating balance; and /or geographic location as it relates to frequency of deliveries.

As a reminder, SFAs are required to follow all Federal, State and Local procurement laws when purchasing equipment under these grants.

Award Timeline

Applications are due **June 1, 2009**. Grants award notifications will be sent out shortly thereafter.

Resources

The National Food Service Management Institute (NFSMI) has recently developed a resource for SFAs entitled "Equipment Purchasing and Facility Design for School Nutrition Programs," which is available on NFSMI's website at <http://nfsmi.org/>.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at telephone number 828-5153, or e-mail, laurie.colgan@state.vt.us.

ARRA FOOD SERVICE EQUIPMENT GRANT APPLICATION

1. SCHOOL FOOD AUTHORITY DATA: Complete this section below with information about the school.

Name of School Food Authority	
Name of Contact Person	
Telephone Number	
Mailing Address	
School(s) included in the application:	

Current School Enrollment:	Students Eligible Free:	Students Eligible Reduced:
October Data - State Agency Use Only:		

2. EQUIPMENT SPECIFICATIONS: Complete this section indicating the equipment you wish to purchase, including the make, model, size and other specifications. Please be specific. If you are including the cost of installation, you must include a complete description of this work and an estimate of the cost.

Item:
Make:
Model:
Size or Other Specifications:

*Explain installation costs, if they will be claimed.	Cost:	
	Installation Cost:*	
	Total Cost \$	

3. **GRANT NARRATIVE:** Please respond to the following questions to support your request for these funds.

A. Describe how this equipment will improve the quality of foodservice meals that meet the dietary guidelines. Why is this equipment needed? If this is replacing old equipment, describe the condition of the current equipment, and how it was determined that this type and size was appropriate for the school. Indicate what criteria were used to determine that this is the best option for the school.

How many quotes did you receive? 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐

B. Describe how this equipment will improve the safety of the food served in the school meal programs.
[cold/hot holding equipment, dishwashing equipment, refrigeration, milk coolers, freezers, etc.]

C. Describe how this equipment will improve the overall energy efficiency of the school food service operations. [purchase of an energy-efficient walk in freezer replacing an out-dated, energy demanding freezer]

D. Describe how this equipment allows the school food authority to support or expand participation in a school meal program or programs. [Equipment for serving meals in a non-traditional setting or to better utilize cafeteria space]

E. Describe how the school will comply with the timeline of purchasing the equipment and submitting the expenditure documentation within three (3) months of the award. If there are barriers that might prevent the school from meeting this timeline, please indicate what these might be.

F. Describe the other equipment fund resources that the school currently has available for the food service program.

4. CERTIFICATION STATEMENT: The grant application/certification statement must be signed by the Food Service Manager or Director, the school administrator, the Business Manager, and the Superintendent.

Certification Statement: I certify that the information in this application is true and correct to the best of my knowledge, and that the equipment acquired with these funds will be used in the non-profit National School Lunch Program to meet the nutritional needs of students.

Signature:	Title: Food Service Manager/Director	Date:
Signature:	Title: School Administrator	Date:
Signature:	Title: Business Manager	Date:
Signature:	Title: Superintendent	Date:

REMINDER: ARRA GRANT APPLICATIONS ARE DUE IN THE CHILD NUTRITION OFFICE JUNE 1, 2009.